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UNCLAS HARARE 001292

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ZIM CRISIS; HARARE

11. Under headline "Pretoria becomes chief stumbling block", the independent daily "The Daily News" dedicated its June 24 editorial to encouraging South African President Thabo Mbeki to stop obstructing international efforts meant to resolve the deepening political and socioeconomic crisis in Zimbabwe. Excerpts:
12. "After years of refusing to act on Zimbabwe's deepening political and economic crisis, the South African government is increasingly showing where its loyalties lie: with the Harare government. At almost every international forum where the crisis is debated and solutions to it are sought, it is none other than Pretoria which always comes forward to blunt international pressure for the tough action to be taken against a rogue government that has rightly become a pariah in the world. . .While we accept that it is South Africa's right to chart a foreign policy of its choice, it is unacceptable that Pretoria should, on one hand, refuse to act against naked and widening injustices while, on the other hand, it also undermines every effort by others who want to end the madness. . .If Mbeki wants to be taken seriously by anyone on NEPAD, he must begin to show resolute and impartial action in resolving a long-festering problem right on his doorstep, or simply let those who have the wherewithal to get on top of an intolerable situation that is worsening by the hour. . .Mbeki must decide. . .whether he is for or against the struggle for democracy by the people of Zimbabwe. In any struggle against tyranny and dictatorship, there should never be fence-sitters, and Mbeki would do well to decide where he belongs. . . ."

SULLIVAN